

WE the People of the States of New-Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode-Island and Providence Plantations, Connecticut, New-York, New-Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North-Carolina, South-Carolina, and Georgia, do ordain, declare and establish the following Constitution for the Government of Ourselves and our Posterity.

ARTICLE I.

The Title of this Government shall be, "The United States of America."

II.

The Government shall consist of supreme legislative, executive and judicial powers.

III.

The legislative power shall be vested in a Congress, to consist of two separate and distinct bodies of men, a House of Representatives, and a Senate; ~~each of which shall, in all cases, have a negative on the other. The Legislature shall meet on the first Monday in December in every year.~~

IV.

Sec. 1. The Members of the House of Representatives shall be chosen every second year, by the people of the several States comprehended within this Union. The qualifications of the electors shall be the same, from time to time, as those of the electors in the several States, of the most numerous branch of their own legislatures.

Sec. 2. Every Member of the House of Representatives shall be of the age of twenty-five years at least; shall have been a citizen of the United States for at least ~~seven~~ years before his election; and shall be, at the time of his election, ~~an inhabitant~~ of the State in which he shall be chosen.

Sec. 3. The House of Representatives shall, at its first formation, and until the number of citizens and inhabitants shall be taken in the manner herein after described, consist of sixty-five Members, of whom three shall be chosen in New-Hampshire, eight in Massachusetts, one in Rhode-Island and Providence Plantations, five in Connecticut, six in New-York, four in New-Jersey, eight in Pennsylvania, one in Delaware, six in Maryland, ten in Virginia, five in North-Carolina, five in South-Carolina, and three in Georgia.

Sec. 4. As the proportions of numbers in the different States will alter from time to time; as some of the States may hereafter be divided; as others may be enlarged by addition of territory; as two or more States may be united; as new States will be erected within the limits of the United States, the Legislature shall, in each of these cases, regulate the number of representatives by the number of inhabitants, according to the ~~ratio~~ *rate* of one for every forty thousand. *Provided that every State shall have at least one Representative.*

Sec. 5. All bills for raising or appropriating money, and for fixing the salaries of the officers of government, shall originate in the House of Representatives, and shall not be altered or amended by the Senate. No money shall be drawn from the public Treasury, but in pursuance of appropriations that shall originate in the House of Representatives.

Sec. 6. The House of Representatives shall have the sole power of impeachment. It shall choose its Speaker and other officers.

Sec. 7. Vacancies in the House of Representatives shall be supplied by writs of election from the executive authority of the State, in the representation from which they shall happen.

V.

The Legislature shall meet at least once in every year and that meeting shall be on the first Monday in December unless a different day shall be appointed by Law.

Struck out

Washington's Own Copy of the Constitution (1787)

As President of the Constitutional Convention, Washington was an important figure in forging the basic framework of our government. This printed draft of the Constitution as it was reported to the Committee on Detail in August, 1787, was Washington's personal copy. It shows corrections made in his large, firm handwriting. At this stage of the drafting of the Constitution, the separate sovereignties of the States had not yet been merged, in the thinking of the delegates, into the United States, as indicated by the opening sentence: "We the People of the States of New-Hampshire, Massachusetts, . . . etc."

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